



ANNUAL REPORT 2018



enabling people with disabilities

OUR MISSION

We empower people with disabilities to live self-directed lives in an equal and inclusive society. Each person is supported and valued within an environment which promotes their overall autonomy, health and wellbeing and enables them to reach their potential.

OUR CORE VALUES

Independence

Partnership

Openness

Integrity

Accountability and
Transparency

Participation in
Community Life

Person Centredness

Rights Based Approach





OUR VISION

Ability West is dedicated to enabling people we support to realise their goals and ambitions.

We will deliver on this vision by:

Placing the fundamental rights of the people we support at the centre of our activities and promoting those rights

Empowering each person we support to live self-directed lives and to play a meaningful role in all aspects of community life

Listening and then developing a variety of options that can be used flexibly to meet their identified needs

Developing the skills and dedication of our staff in a supportive and motivating environment

Working in active partnership with the people we support, families, staff, our voluntary supporters and the broader community

Campaigning at local, regional and national level to resource and realise our vision to achieve these aims



*Elizabeth Kelly on Winning Streak
l-r: Sinead Kennedy, RTE, Elizabeth Kelly, Service User,
Marty Whelan, RTE and Margaret Foy, Staff Member*

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CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

Ability West provided services and supports to over 590 children and adults with intellectual disability and autism in 2018. I am pleased to report that the organisation continued to protect frontline services and supports. Ability West risk funded a number of safeguarding cases as safety of the individuals availing of our services is paramount. The operating budget for 2018 was increased on the previous year's budget taking into account the full year costs for 2017 school leavers, and additional funding for respite.

Ability West has prepared its financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice and the Companies Act 2014. Please refer to the following sections of this annual report: Directors' Report, Structure, Governance and Management. The full audited accounts for 2018 are available on our website: www.abilitywest.ie.

In November 2018, the Charities Regulator published a 'Charities Governance Code' for all registered charities in Ireland. This code has six principles with 49 standards. All charities must be compliant with this code by January 2020 and complete a Compliance Report on an annual basis from 2021. Ability West has commenced work on this code and the organisation will be compliant with the code by the deadline of January 2020.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Messrs. Frank O'Connell, Cormac Flynn and Darragh Sheehy who commenced on the Board of Directors in July 2018, January and April 2019 respectively. It is also opportune to acknowledge and thank Mr. Jack King, Mrs. Bridie Newell, Mrs. Marie O'Dowd and Mrs. Mary O'Mahony who resigned from the Board of Directors in May 2018. In particular, I would like to sincerely thank long-serving members, Mrs. O'Dowd and Mrs. O'Mahony, for their many years of support to Ability West which is very much appreciated.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the members of the Tuam Branch of Ability West who volunteered over the last



Redmond (Ray) Kelly, Chairman

52 years and retired as a branch during 2018. Their commitment, assistance and support to Ability West has been second to none and we are very grateful to every member of the Tuam Branch for their efforts on behalf of people with intellectual disability.

I would like to acknowledge the support and commitment of my fellow Board Members and on behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to sincerely thank Breda Crehan-Roche, Chief Executive, Carol A. Browne, Recording Secretary to the Board, the Senior Management Team and all the staff for their hard work, commitment and dedication to the provision of high-quality services and support to children and adults with intellectual disability and autism.

Our work is strengthened by our many friends and supporters, including: donors, volunteers and our statutory funders: Health Service Executive and the Departments of Education and Skills, and Social Protection. We are very appreciative of this commitment and support and on behalf of the Board of Directors, I thank you all sincerely.

Is mian liom buíochas a gabháil agus aitheantas a thabhairt do gach aon duine a thug tacaíocht do Éirim an Iarthair i rith na bliana. Tá mór mheas again faoi do thacaíocht leanúnach agus do thiomantas.



Redmond (Ray) Kelly, Chairman

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REVIEW OF 2018

2018 saw Ability West deliver on the final year of the Strategic Plan 2014-2018 and work also commenced on a new five year Strategic Plan 2019-2023. During 2018 we undertook extensive consultation with key stakeholders including the people we support, the Service User Council, Board of Directors, Family Forum, Senior Management Team, Middle Management, Unit Directors, Staff, Volunteers and we held five focus groups throughout Galway City and County. This has resulted in an ambitious strategic plan which will ensure that the work we do is firmly focussed on the needs of children and adults who avail of our services and supports. Our key focus will always be the people who avail of our services and supports and how we can continuously improve so that the people we support live the lives they wish to live. There are eight strategic goals in the new plan:



Breda Crehan-Roche, Chief Executive

The strategic plan is available on our website at www.abilitywest.ie.

In this annual report you will read about achievements and stories from a number of people and about the positive impact that Ability West has on their lives.

Thankfully, there were no funding cuts to our HSE allocation in 2018; the initial core funding allocation for the year was €24,946,643 which took into account the full year effect of funding provided in 2017. Additional funding was provided for some respite, funding to address some safeguarding issues, and also some once-off development funding for new day services. We received an allocation of €139,000 for centre-based respite as part of the National €10m respite development for 2018. We were delighted to welcome Minister of State for Disability Issues, Finian McGrath, to Grangemore Group Home in June 2018 to meet with service users and families who benefited from this allocation. Notwithstanding this, Ability West continued to face many challenges such as safeguarding; endeavouring to respond to the changing needs of ageing service users; adapting our services and supports for individuals with complex needs; managing compatibility; responding to emergencies and the ever-increasing demands for respite and community supports.

Year on year we are finding that service users have additional support

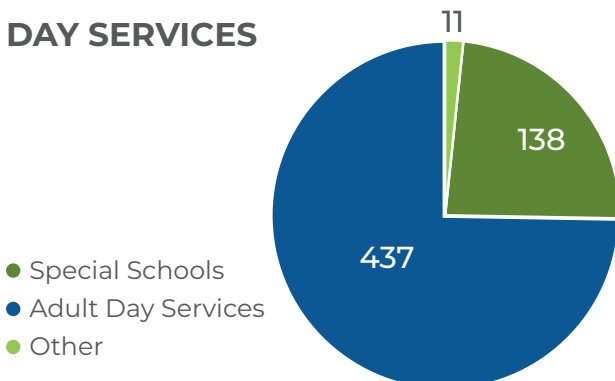
requirements or 'changing needs', such as mobility issues related to age, cognitive changes and general age-related conditions. Where additional supports were required Ability West submitted business cases to the HSE to seek funding. In some cases, we did receive some funding and we were able to respond within our core budget, and other times we had to risk fund supports.

For the past number of years we have seen increased non-pay costs which can be attributed to the rising cost of insurance, heating, motor fuel and the ongoing maintenance of our buildings and our ageing vehicle fleet. Ability West was invited to access the OGP (Office of Government Procurement) Framework in 2018 and it is envisaged that there will be non-pay savings from having access to this framework.

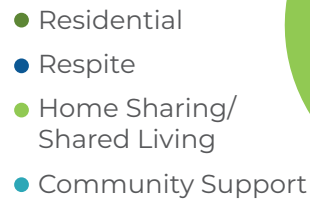
As always, Ability West staff worked very hard alongside service users and their families to meet all of these challenges and I am delighted that we were able to protect frontline services and respond to additional needs. Thankfully, despite the challenges we faced, we achieved a better than breakeven financial situation in 2018 and this is particularly important given the deficits incurred in previous years. The financial statements for 2018 have been completed using the Financial Reporting Standard FRS102 and drafted cognisant of the Charities SORP (Statement of Recommended Practice). The full audited accounts are available on our website at www.abilitywest.ie.

Ability West provided the following direct services in 2018:

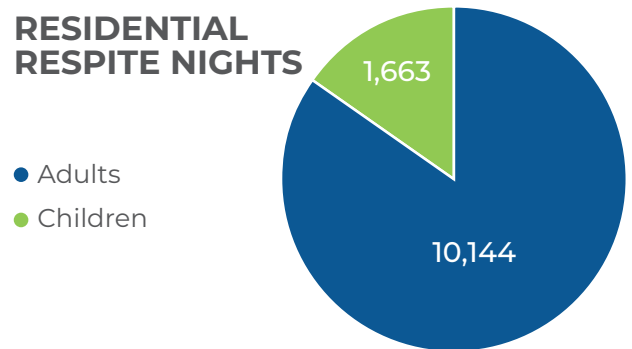
DAY SERVICES



RESIDENTIAL AND RESPITE SERVICES



RESIDENTIAL RESPITE NIGHTS

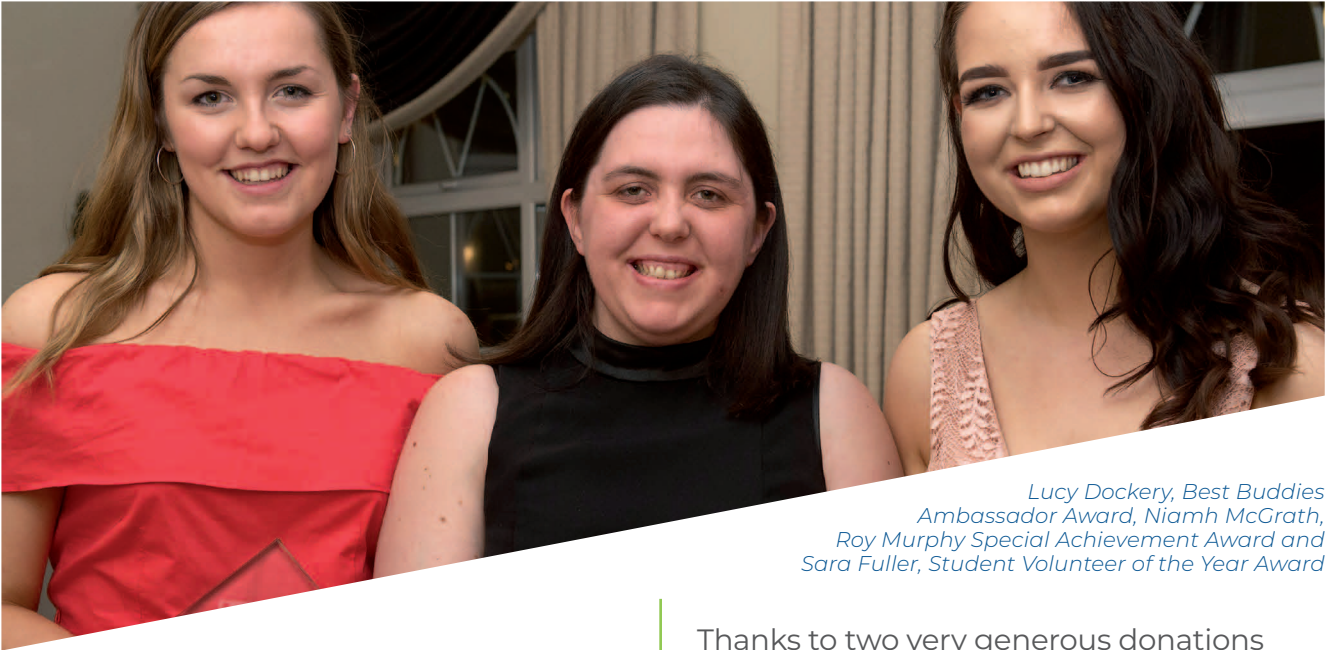


CAPITAL UPDATE

There have been no significant capital grants since 2008 for agencies like Ability West. Last year, through fundraised monies and efficiencies, we were able to undertake extensive renovations in our services under our capital programme. These renovations included: upgrading of emergency lighting in our group homes, internal and external painting, boundary/fence repairs and replacement in Grange View and Palace Fields, boiler replacement in Criost Linn, new wet rooms in Glen Haven and Oldfield Group Homes, and the addition of double French doors in Macotar and Seacrest Group Homes for fire safety and evacuation.

A new wet room was installed in Meitheal Centre, Moycullen, which was made possible through a grant received from Galway Wind Farm Project, other fundraising events and capital funds from Ability West. A replacement boiler was fitted in Milaoise and painting was carried out in several of our day services.

Planning permission was sought for a number of capital developments including: extension to Clochatuisce Group Home to facilitate the mobility and



Lucy Dockery, Best Buddies Ambassador Award, Niamh McGrath, Roy Murphy Special Achievement Award and Sara Fuller, Student Volunteer of the Year Award

ageing needs of the residents, extension to St. Francis Adult Day Service, Kilkerrin, to accommodate service users moving from Dochas Adult Day Service, extensive renovations to the Dochas building for respite to transfer from Mountbellew as capacity has become an issue in the day service. Planning permission has been granted in all of these cases and works are in progress or being planned currently.

Two sites were purchased during 2018, one in Carraroe to accommodate a new school building and the second in Headford to accommodate a new day service/hub, trike park and eventually residential/respite services. Planning for both of these projects has commenced, however, the Headford project is largely dependent on fundraising money and we will be focussing our fundraising efforts to develop services in the Headford area over the coming years.

TRANSPORT

During 2018 we decommissioned three buses due to their age and cost of operating. Thankfully, we were able to replace buses in Sylvan and Clochatuisce Group Homes and purchase a bus for use by a number of city services.

Thanks to two very generous donations to the Glenamaddy Branch and some fundraised money we were able to purchase a bus for Dochas/St. Francis Adult Day Service. We will take delivery of this bus in May 2019. We are grateful to Edel Cunningham who started a fundraising campaign to raise funds to purchase a bus for the services we have in Portumna. Edel was joined by the Friends of Portumna, families, services and the local community who fundraised tirelessly for this campaign. Sincere thanks to all involved and everyone who supported the various fundraising events. This bus was delivered in April 2019.

A new transport route was added to our existing transport routes to accommodate new school leavers.

An introduction to positive behaviour support and autism spectrum disorder, and safeguarding vulnerable persons awareness were two training modules delivered to drivers and escorts in August which was a great success.

NEW COMMUNITY HUBS

A new community hub was set up in Tuam for school leavers and adults who graduated from rehabilitative training. This hub was set up in line with New Directions interim standards that embrace the premise of contribution and participation in the community. Many thanks to everyone involved in setting up this service.

A new hub in Galway City has replaced two individual hubs and extensive works were carried out to adapt the hub for the individuals accessing this service. Further works have more recently been done to enhance the environment for some service users availing of this service.

EXTERNAL THIRD PARTY ACCREDITATION

Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA)

Since HIQA became responsible for the regulation of residential and respite services for children and adults with disabilities in November 2013, all of Ability West's services have received re-registration/renewal, the exception being one designated centre that is not due for re-registration until 2019. Re-registration/renewal takes place every three years. Two newly opened services, Teach Michael Apartments in Galway City and Riverside Apartments in Tuam, were successfully registered with HIQA in 2018. These are properties owned by Carraig Dubh Housing Association and Ability West is the service provider in accordance with the Service Arrangement in place.

In 2018 we had 25 unannounced inspections from HIQA and the learning and outcomes from these inspections has transferred to all our residential and respite services. Sincere thanks to our Persons in Charge, their teams, staff in Quality and Compliance, Client Services, Human Resources, Finance and the Chief Executive's Office. Further information is provided in the Quality and Compliance Update in this report.

Excellence Through People 1000:2012

We had a surveillance audit in May 2018 during which the Auditor assessed our services against this standard and we were successful in maintaining this accreditation. The Auditor reported that the feedback from staff interviewed was consistently that they were happy with their role in the organisation. I would like to acknowledge all involved for their input, in particular Ben Coddell-Browne, Human Resources, who assisted the process.

I.S.EN 9001:2015

All of our services are accredited to the ISO standard I.S. EN 9001:2015 which has increased focus on leadership, management, service user (customer) focus and continuous improvement. The National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) completed a surveillance audit in May 2018. The audit went very well and Ability West retained this standard. Well done to Eileen Costello-Conneely, Quality and Compliance Manager, and to all involved.

ISO 31000:2018

Ability West has reviewed its processes on risk management during 2018 and these are now aligned to the standard ISO 31000:2018, a framework for integrated risk management, providing a structure to follow in relation to how the organisation manages risk and its commitment. This was published in 2018 and is aligned to the HSE policy in this regard and insofar as it is applicable to Section 39 funded organisations.

QQI Accreditation for Training Services Users

Ability West is accredited to provide QQI programmes in St. Joseph's Training Services (all locations of rehabilitative training). We engaged with QQI in 2018 to review and update our quality assurance processes in line with their updated standards. In November 2018 a total of 25 certifications were achieved by service users in modular areas in these QQI programmes, such as personal care, computer skills, reading and personal safety. I am delighted to welcome Matthew Ellis, Manager, St. Joseph's Training Services, who commenced with the organisation in January 2019 and wish Matthew and his team success going forward.



Minister McGrath's visit to Grangemore. Family, Service Users, Staff and Board Members of Ability West met Finian McGrath, Minister for Disability Issues, Representatives from the HSE, Department of Health, Western Care Association and Sean Kyne, Minister of State for Community Development

VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME

The Best Buddies Ball took place in May 2018, this was an extra-special occasion as we celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Best Buddies Programme. Congratulations to Sara Fuller who won Student Volunteer of the Year, Lucy Dockery who won Best Buddies Ambassador Award and Niamh McGrath who won the Roy Murphy Special Achievement Award. The 2019 Best Buddies Ball takes place in May and will, no doubt, be another enjoyable night.

SERVICE USER COUNCIL

The Service User Council continued to meet during 2018 and they initiated a new Advocacy Champion Programme. The Council also held a Consultation Day in November 2018 which was well attended by service users. The Chief Executive and members of the Senior Management Team attended part of this meeting to answer questions about access to volunteers, funding, respite, etc. and to listen to views and suggestions. The Council also participated in the new strategic plan consultation process, reviewed our Vision and Mission statements and they provided important guidance on the changes we needed to make to these statements. I would like to acknowledge the great work undertaken by the members of the Service User Council and Chairperson, John Farragher.

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

The Human Rights Committee continued to meet in 2018 and Mr. John O'Dea, Independent Chairperson, met with the Board of Directors in November 2018 to appraise them of the committee's progress. Mr. O'Dea and I also met during the year to discuss the operations of the committee.

RESTRICTIVE PRACTICES COMMITTEE

This Committee met a number of times in 2018 to ensure that Ability West continues to promote the ethos of positive interventions and work towards a restraint free environment. In a small number of cases restrictive practices may be necessary, the guiding principle being that the least restrictive practice is used and only as a last resort, ensuring that the practice used is legitimate, safe and minimal.

THANKS TO THE PRESENTATION SISTERS

Ability West was delighted and honoured to welcome the Presentation Sisters back to Blackrock House in February 2018 to unveil a plaque in recognition of their generous donation of the Blackrock House building to the organisation in 1999. This building serves as the headquarters for the organisation and also accommodates an adult day service. Prior to that it was a residential hostel operated by the organisation. We are indebted to the Presentation Sisters for donating this magnificent building to Ability West.

TUAM BRANCH OF ABILITY WEST

Sadly, the Tuam Branch of Ability West retired after 52 years in operation. However, there has been 52 years of solid commitment, support and dedication by the many members that comprised the branch and we are hugely grateful to them all. We wish them all the very best in the future. The Chairman and I met with the Branch Members to thank them for their support and acknowledge their contribution to Ability West.

OUTLOOK FOR 2019

There continues to be challenging times ahead and we must continue to provide our services efficiently and effectively. The changing needs of service users is a particular challenge with increased requirements for buildings that suit people with limited mobility, behaviours that challenge, complexities and comorbidity. There are increased demands for respite and residential services and we are challenged in our response to same due to lack of funding. Families require respite and this is a very valuable resource for them. We augment traditional residential respite with community supports and short breaks. Parents of our older service users, who have cared so diligently for their sons and daughters, are now getting older themselves and are finding it difficult to continue to care for their loved ones. Unfortunately, we have waiting lists for residential and respite services, however we work hard to offer support services and prioritise emergency cases.

BEREAVEMENTS

Sadly, during 2018, we had four service user bereavements: Lorna Manogue, Paddy McGrath, Seamus Molloy and John Walshe. Many of our service users, families, staff, branch, board members and volunteers also experienced bereavements and we extend our deepest sympathies to them. May they all rest in peace.



*Ability West honouring the Presentation Sisters in February 2018
From back l-r: Sr. Anne Fox, Sr. Kathleen McDonagh, Sr. Riona McHugh, Sr. Regina Walsh, Sr. Margaret O'Brien, Sr. Margaret Curry, Mary O'Mahony, Board Member, Ability West, Sr. Kathleen Fahy, John McHugo, Director of Finance, Ability West, Breda Crehan-Roche, Chief Executive, Sr. Pauline Morris, Ray Kelly, Chairman, Ability West, Sr. Mairéad Rabbitte*

CONCLUSION

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our Chairman, Ray Kelly, and Board Members for their guidance and assistance and for giving so generously of their time and expertise to Ability West. I would also like to thank service users, their parents, carers and families for their ongoing co-operation. To the Directors and Assistant Directors of Client Services, Finance and Human Resources, Department Heads, Managers, Unit Directors, staff, branch members, Community Employment Scheme and TÚS participants, and all volunteers thank you for your enormous contributions during 2018. The dedication and commitment of staff and volunteers across the whole organisation is truly exceptional. Special thanks to Carol A. Browne, Communications and Executive Office Manager, for her ongoing support and invaluable assistance.



Snipe Resource Centre Advocacy Group undertook a campaign for the footpaths in Liosbán Industrial Estate to be adapted to a wheelchair user friendly state. Pictured are members of the Advocacy Group with the workers involved in adapting the footpaths. Well done to all involved.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the HSE, in particular Tony Canavan, Chief Officer, Elaine Prendergast, Head of Service - Social Care, John Fitzmaurice, General Manager - Disability Services, Mary O'Donnell, Disability Services Manager Galway, Liam Fogarty, Head of Finance, and Gerry Burke, Integrated Services, Community Health Organisation West, for their ongoing support and assistance. I would also like to thank the many statutory, non-statutory and voluntary service providers that Ability West works with for their ongoing co-operation and assistance.

Together, we will work to ensure that we provide person centred quality services and supports to ensure that the people we are privileged to work with, be of service to and support, are empowered and enabled to live the lives of their choice in their local communities.

Ba mhaith liom buíochas a ghabháil leis an gCathaoirleach, leis an mBord Stiúirthóirí agus le baill uile na bhfochoistí as a dtacaíocht agus a dtreoir le linn 2018. Ba mhaith liom buíochas a ghabháil freisin leo siúd a d'fhreastal agus a bhain úsáid as ár seirbhísí, leis na tuismitheoirí agus a gclanna. Ba mhaith liom buíochas a ghabháil le baill uile na gCraobh as ucht a gcuid tacaíochta, leis an bhFoireann Bainistíochta, le Stiúirthóirí na nIonad, leis an bhFoireann agus leis na hOibrithe Deonacha, as ucht seirbhís den scoth a chuir ar fáil.

Breda Crehan-Roche.

Breda Crehan-Roche
Chief Executive

DIRECTORS' REPORT



Board of Directors and Chief Executive
 Front l-r: Frank O'Connell, Breda Crehan-Roche, Chief Executive, Ray Kelly, Chairman
 2nd row l-r: Breda Dolan, Páraic Lawless,
 3rd row l-r: Anthony O'Connor, Mick Finnerty
 4th row l-r: Kevin Newell, Kevin O'Flaharta
 Back row l-r: Kevin Flavin and Darragh Sheehy
 Missing from photo: Paddy Daly and Cormac Flynn

STRUCTURE

Ability West is a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ability West is governed by the members of the Board who are elected on an annual basis at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Each region can nominate two Directors to the Board, one of whom must be a family member of a service user of the company. A 'family member' means the parent, grandparent, legal guardian, sibling, spouse of a sibling, child of a sibling, aunt, uncle, spouse of an aunt or uncle or child of an aunt or uncle of a service user. Members are also co-opted having regard to the skill mix of the Board.

The Board of Directors met 10 times during the year:

ATTENDANCE AT BOARD MEETINGS - 2018

NAME	J	M	A	M 21/05	M 28/05	J	S	O	N	D	Total
Paddy Daly	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10
Breda Dolan	x	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	6
Mick Finnerty	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10
Kevin Flavin	✓	✓	x	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Jack King	✓	✓	✓	✓	Resigned directorship 21/05/18						4
Ray Kelly	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10
Páraic Lawless	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10
Bridie Newell	x	✓	✓	✓	Resigned directorship 21/05/18						3
Kevin Newell	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	9
Frank O'Connell	Ratified as a Director 16/07/2018					✓	✓	✓	x	✓	4
Anthony O'Connor	x	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8
Marie O'Dowd	✓	✓	✓		Resigned directorship 21/05/18						3
Kevin O Flaharta	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	9
Mary O'Mahony	✓	✓	x	✓	Resigned directorship 21/05/18						3
Mary Treacy	Ratified as a Director 28/05/2018					x	x	Resigned directorship 03/09/18			0

Within the Board's broad governance role are a number of specific roles that are exercised, including: approval of the strategic plan, reporting to members at the Annual General Meeting and passing bye-laws which are subject to approval by the members. The reserved functions of the Board are: appointment of the Chief Executive, approval of the annual budget, acquisition and disposal of company assets and overall corporate governance.

The Chief Executive accounts for her stewardship at Board meetings.

The Board of Directors are supported by a Board Committee structure which deals effectively with specific aspects of the business of the company. The Board Committees in place are:

- Audit Committee
- Finance Committee
- Nominations Committee
- Quality and Safety Board Committee
- Visiting Committee

The Board Members do not receive remuneration in respect of services provided to Ability West, however, they are entitled to claim reimbursement of expenses, such as travel.

BOARD MEMBERS 2018

- **Mr. Redmond (Ray) Kelly**, Chairperson and Elected Director
- **Ms. Breda Dolan**, Vice Chairperson and Co-opted Director
- **Mr. Patrick J. Daly**, Company Secretary and Co-opted Director
- **Mr. Kevin Flavin**, Hon. Treasurer and Co-opted Director
- **Mr. Jack King**, Co-opted Director (resigned May 2018)
- **Mr. Michael (Mick) Finnerty**, Elected Director
- **Mr. Kevin Flaherty (O Flatharta)**, Co-opted Director
- **Mr. Patrick (Páraig) Lawless**, Elected Director

- **Mrs. Bridie Newell**, Elected Director (resigned May 2018)
- **Mr. Kevin Newell**, Elected Director
- **Mr. Michael (Anthony) O'Connor**, Co-opted Director
- **Mr. Frank O'Connell**, Co-opted Director (appointed July 2018)
- **Mrs. Marie O'Dowd**, Elected Director (resigned May 2018)
- **Mrs. Mary O'Mahony**, Co-opted Director (resigned May 2018)
- **Ms. Mary Treacy**, Elected Director (appointed May 2018, resigned September 2018)

IN ATTENDANCE

- **Mrs. Breda Crehan-Roche**, Chief Executive
- **Ms. Carol A. Browne**, Recording Secretary

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT, SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

Senior Management Team

- Chief Executive, Mrs. Breda Crehan-Roche
- Director of Human Resources, Mr. Cathal Esler (appointed January 2019)
- Director of Finance, Mr. John McHugo
- Director of Client Services, Ms. Audrey Pidgeon (appointed April 2018)
- Recording Secretary, Ms. Carol A. Browne

Finance Committee

The role of the Finance Committee is to keep the financial management of Ability West under review. The Committee consists of Board Members, one of whom is the Honorary Treasurer and two members of the Senior Management Team, i.e. the Chief Executive and Director of Finance. The Finance Committee meets regularly during the course of the year and the current members are:

- Mr. Kevin Flavin, Chairman
- Mrs. Breda Crehan-Roche
- Ms. Breda Dolan
- Mr. Patrick Lawless
- Mr. John McHugo
- Mr. Kevin Newell



AGM 2018
 l-r: Dermot Callanan, Partner, FCC Chartered Accountants & Registered Auditors, John McHugo, Director of Finance, Breda Crehan-Roche, Chief Executive, Ability West, Eamon Loughrey, Director of Services, Brothers of Charity Services Ireland – Galway Region, Seamus Durkin, Head of Finance, Brothers of Charity Services Ireland – Galway Region, Ray Kelly, Chairman, Ability West

Audit Committee

The role of the Audit Committee is to keep under review the adequacy, scope and effectiveness of accounting and internal control systems of all activities carried out by Ability West. The Committee is chaired by a Board Member and membership includes a second Board Member and two external, independent members who have audit and financial experience. The members of the Audit Committee are:

- Mr. Patrick J. Daly, Chairman
- Mr. Kevin Flavin
- Mr. Jack King
- Mr. Gerry Walsh

Nominations Committee

The Board of Directors set up this Committee to respond to changing compliance requirements as a result of the introduction by the HSE of an Annual Compliance Statement for Section 39 funded organisations. The Committee is tasked with the core responsibilities of managing the appointment process for new board members and succession planning for the Board of Directors. It must ensure that:

“The membership of the Board of Directors should reflect diversity in terms of gender, skills and areas of competency. The size of the Board of Directors should be large enough to take account of the full range of members’ duties and responsibilities but small enough to enable the Board of Directors to perform effectively.”

Membership of the committee:

- Mr. Ray Kelly, Chairman
- Mr. Patrick J. Daly
- Mr. Kevin Newell

IN ATTENDANCE

- Mrs. Breda Crehan-Roche, Chief Executive

These meetings are held bi-annually, or as required.

Quality and Safety Board Committee

The purpose of this Committee is to assure the Board of Directors that there are appropriate and effective systems in place that cover all aspects of clinical, quality and safety. The Committee oversees the development of the quality and safety



AGM 2018

l-r: Breda Crehan-Roche, Chief Executive, Ability West, Cllr. Mike Cubbard, Deputy Mayor, Ray Kelly, Chairman, Ability West and Deputy Éamon Ó Cuív, TD.

programme by the executive/Senior Management Team; ensures policies and processes clearly articulate responsibility, authority and accountability for quality, safety and risk management across the service; secures assurance from the executive/Senior Management Team on the implementation of the quality and safety programme and the application of appropriate governance structure and processes, for example risk escalation, including monitored outcomes through quality indicators and outcome measures; and secures assurance from the executive/Senior Management Team that Ability West is conforming with all regulatory and legal requirements to assure quality, safety and risk management. The membership of the Quality and Safety Board Committee is as follows:

- All Board Members
- Chief Executive
- Director of Client Services
- Director of Finance
- Director of Human Resources
- Quality and Compliance Manager
- Recording Secretary (in attendance)

Visiting Committee

The purpose of the Visiting Committee is for Board Members to visit various services provided by Ability West.

All Board Members carry out this function in pairs to see the services, meet the service manager, staff and service users. A written report is completed and copies are provided to all Board Members. The reports are reviewed at the next Board meeting following the visit and the Chief Executive provides feedback on any issues the Board Members reported on and answers any queries.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Constitution

Ability West is a not-for-profit organisation providing services and supports to over 590 children and adults with disability across Galway City and County. The company is governed by a Constitution which was most recently amended and ratified in March 2017 following an EGM. At that time, the changes to the Constitution brought the governance of the organisation in line with the Companies Act 2014.

The principle objective of Ability West is to benefit the community through the promotion and/or provision of the highest possible standard of service, support, treatment, training, education, general welfare of persons with disability in their own communities and the giving of advice, guidance and support to parents/guardians and family members of persons with disability. The company provides services and supports through rehabilitative training, adult day services, residential and respite care, short breaks, home sharing and contract families, community supports, volunteers, work placements, and multi-disciplinary supports including speech and language therapy, physiotherapy, positive behaviour support, occupational therapy, social work and psychology. These supports are in place to empower people with disabilities to live self-directed supported lives in an equal and inclusive society.

There have been no changes in the principle objectives since the last Directors' Report.

Appointment of Directors

The Directors of the Board are elected at the Annual General Meeting in accordance with the company's Articles of Association. Directors are also co-opted having regard to the optimum skill mix of the Board.

Induction and Training of Directors

An induction programme is in place for new Directors on commencement of their term in office, which includes a Code of Conduct and Terms of Reference document for members. Any changes to regulation and legal requirements are notified to members at Board meetings and relevant training is also provided. Training for Directors is provided on an ongoing basis. The next scheduled training is in May 2019 which will be provided by The Wheel and covers corporate governance, roles and responsibilities of board members.

Organisational Structure and Decision Making

Ability West is governed by the members of the Board who are elected in accordance with the company's Constitution. The Directors are non-executive members of the company, who receive no remuneration for their services and represent diverse skills, expertise and backgrounds. The Board meets approximately 10 times per year. Collectively, the Board has non-executive responsibility, including the corporate governance of the company and the services it provides.

The Board delegates the day to day management of Ability West to the Chief Executive, who is in turn supported by a tiered management system that identifies clear lines of accountability and responsibility at each level.

The Board recognises the value of high standards of corporate governance and to this end is supported by various Board Committees, as noted earlier. These committees are responsible for overseeing particular aspects of the work of the company and reporting to the Board.

Risk Management

The Directors have assessed the major risks to which the company is exposed, in particular those related to its operations and finances, and are satisfied that systems and procedures are in place to mitigate exposure to major risks.

The management of risk in the company is viewed by the Board as a corporate governance priority and a robust Risk Management Policy is in place which is regularly reviewed. The Board also has a Quality and Safety Board Committee as detailed earlier.

The company's internal control systems are supported by policies, procedures, protocols and guidelines covering all aspects of the work of the organisation.

Compliance

During 2018 the Board of Directors completed the HSE Annual Compliance Statement for Section 39 funded agencies in respect of 2017. This statement was signed by the Chairperson and another Board Member and submitted to the HSE. The 2018 Annual Compliance Statement is due to be submitted to the HSE by end May 2019.

The annual budget is approved by the Board of Directors. Management accounts, including comparisons with the annual budget programme, are reported to the Board on a regular basis by the Chairperson of the Finance Committee as well as the approval of staff appointments/remuneration.

It is the policy of Ability West that all staff and volunteers, including members of the Board, operate subject to best practice recruitment policies and Garda vetting procedures. All staff and volunteers are made aware of their responsibilities to protect those they support through adherence to national policies, e.g. Children First and Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse. The company has a 'no tolerance' approach to any form of abuse and promotes a culture which supports this ethos.

ABILITY WEST'S OBJECTIVES 2018

For Children and Family Services;

- To provide a quality and timely service across our children's services, multi-disciplinary assessment, intervention and services, respite, home sharing and contract families, as well as other supports, including improvements to waiting lists and innovations.
- Ability West works with the Health Service Executive, Brothers of Charity Services Galway and Enable Ireland in relation to the transition of multi-disciplinary services in line with national policy, i.e. Progressing Disability Services for Children, with the introduction of Springtime Children's Services

Ability West's children's residential respite services are inspected by HIQA and comply with HIQA standards and regulation.

Ability West is patron of four special schools as follows:

- St. Joseph's Special School, Newcastle, Galway
- St. Oliver's Special School, Tuam, Co. Galway
- St. Teresa's Special School, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway
- Tigh Nan Dooley Scoil Speisialta, An Cheathrú Rua, Co. Na Gaillimhe

For Adult Services;

- Comply with HIQA standards and regulations for adult residential and respite services
- Implement the HSE interim standards for New Directions in day services
- Advance opportunities for more personalised services and supports in day and residential settings
- Enable adults with intellectual disability and autism to live as independently as possible in their own communities. Self-directed supported living options will be provided insofar as is possible

- Provide multi-disciplinary services and supports to adults, including improvements to waiting lists and innovation
- Work closely with the Service User Council
- Continually review delivery of services to meet service users' expressed needs and preferences
- Empower individuals to make choices to enable them to reach their full potential
- Utilise mainstream services, supports and options

For Families, Friends and Community;

- Encourage and foster the involvement of families and natural supports
- Consolidate and build on existing partnerships with families and stakeholders e.g. Family Forum
- Nurture the organisation's culture that promotes community participation and active involvement

For Staff, Volunteers, Community Employment Scheme and Other Scheme Participants, e.g. TÚS;

- To have an effective staff allocation, work/life balance and achieve lower than 3% absenteeism rate
- To have a flexible and skilled workforce to meet the needs of service users within available resources
- Ongoing training will be provided to staff, volunteers and Community Employment (CE) Scheme participants and others in relation to best practice, person centred planning and self-direction methodology of service provision
- Mandatory training will be provided to staff, volunteers and CE Scheme participants in compliance with legislation



Senior Management Team (l-r):
 Audrey Pidgeon, Director of Client Services,
 Cathal Esler, Director of Human Resources, Breda
 Crehan-Roche, Chief Executive, John McHugo, Director
 of Finance, Carol A. Browne, Recording Secretary.

For Ability West's Resources;

- To manage within the budget allocation
- To comply fully with statutory and legal requirements
- Secure adequate resources
- Ensure the efficient and effective utilisation of resources
- Organise ongoing fundraising to contribute to capital projects

For Ability West as a Company

- Continue with external accreditation, I.S. EN ISO 9001:2015, Excellence Through People 1000:2012, QQI for training programmes
- Ensure that Ability West, as Registered Provider, as per HIQA standards and regulation, continues to carry out unannounced visits to residential and respite designated centres
- Implement HSE interim standards for New Directions in day services
- Continue auditing all services and supports in line with external accreditation, compliance and regulation
- Ensure active participation of Ability West in the community

STRATEGIES FOR ACHIEVING OBJECTIVES

Strategic Plan 2014 – 2018 had four strategic priorities

1. Services and Supports for the Individual
2. Partnership with Families, Friends and Community
3. Resource Management
4. Communication

The 2018 plan ended in December with a final progress report provided to the Board of Directors at their meeting on 17th December 2018. A summary of progress on the key deliverables under this plan is noted for 2018:

- 84% of new admissions have person centred plans in place with the remainder in progress
- In line with the Companies Act 2014 Ability West presented an annual report and audited accounts at an AGM held in May 2018. Trustee changes were filed with the Companies Registration Office as required. An annual return was submitted to the Charities Regulator in October 2018

- Compliance with National Quality Standards for Residential and Respite Service was 95% (compliant and substantially compliant) with the regulatory requirements of S.I. 367 for designated centres
- 40% of family member involvement on the Board of Directors
- 94 staff trained in a variety of Speech and Language courses: Lámh, Visual Communication Supports and Positive Behaviour Support, and Communication and Behaviour, FEDS (Feeding, Eating, Drinking, Swallowing)
- 181 staff received FEDS Awareness and Refresher training
- An average of 40 individuals per month received some FEDS intervention
- 2 sites were purchased at Carraroe and Headford.
- 3 buses were ordered in late 2018.
- Several HIQA and health and safety related projects were completed in 2018
- A Service User Consultation Day was held in November 2018
- Two Family Fora were held in April and October 2018
- 220 active volunteers
- 79 individuals availed of home share/ contract family/shared living schemes
- *So Can I* Disability Awareness Training programmes were delivered to 2 secondary schools in Galway

A new five year strategic plan spanning the years 2019 to 2023 was developed and approved by the Board of Directors at their meeting on 17th December 2018. This plan provides a roadmap for services, supports and the organisational development of Ability West and outlines the destination that we wish to arrive at. The plan was launched in February 2019 and is available on our website: www.abilitywest.ie/ resources.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Solicitors

Kieran Murphy & Co., 9 The Crescent, Galway, H91 W6T7

Advokat Compliance, Merrythought House, Templeshannon, Enniscorthy, Co Wexford, Y21 E0F3

Bank

Bank of Ireland, 22 Mainguard Street, Galway, H91 TX21

Auditors

FCC Chartered Accountants & Registered Auditors, 3rd Floor, Lismoyle House, Merchants Road, Galway, H91 KPY0

Registered Office

Blackrock House, Salthill, Galway, H91 R254

Ability West is a Company Limited by Guarantee, registered no. 41317 and is registered with the Revenue Commissioners as a Charity under Registration No. CHY6306. Ability West is approved for the Scheme of Tax Relief for Donations to Eligible Charities and other Approved Bodies under Section 848A Taxes Consolidation 1997 under Tax No. 2237226Q.

Éirim an Iarthair is a registered Business Name under the Registration of Business Names Act, 1963, Registered No. 335139.

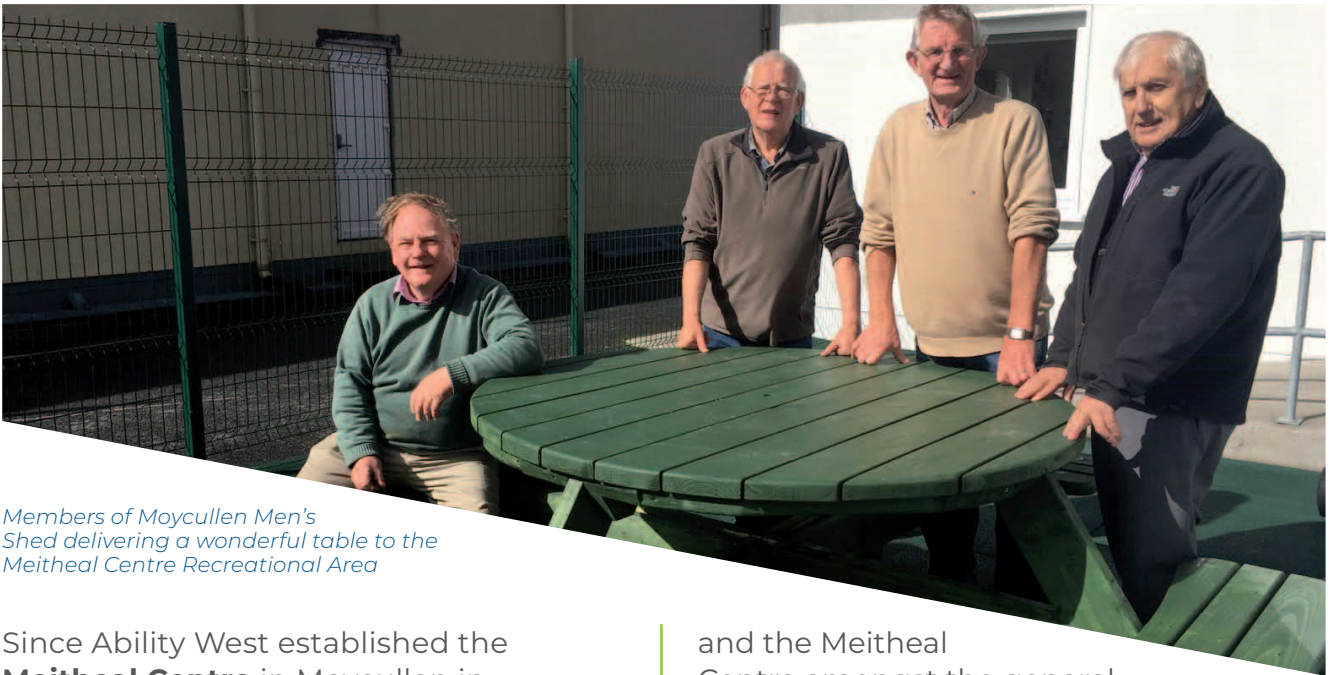
Ability West:

- Is a registered charity under the Charities Regulator, registration no. 20011161
- Quality Management System is ISO 9001:2015 accredited, National Standards Authority of Ireland
- Excellence Through People, 1000: 2012, National Standards Authority of Ireland
- Has signed up to the Guidelines for Charitable Organisations Fundraising from the Public (Charities Regulator)
- Is working towards compliance with the Charities Governance Code which launched in November 2018. Compliance with the code is required by January 2020
- Is an equal opportunities employer

This annual report was project managed by Ms. Carol A. Browne, Communications and Executive Office Manager, and co-ordinated by Ms. Paulette Cully, Administration Officer, Executive's Office.

MEITHEAL CENTRE UPDATE 2018

BY STEPHEN TOGHER



Members of Moycullen Men's Shed delivering a wonderful table to the Meitheal Centre Recreational Area

Since Ability West established the **Meitheal Centre** in Moycullen in September 2016 it has operated under the premise of 'New Directions', personal support services for adults with disabilities, which provides a community-based individualised service for young people with an intellectual disability. Young people attending the Meitheal Centre have a real presence in their community, leading to greater participation in everyday events and a natural erosion of barriers to inclusion. This is evident in our regular interactions with the general public on the streets of Moycullen, in coffee shops, restaurants, retail outlets and the Moycullen Market, where we meet our neighbours, friends (new and old) and relatives of the people attending the centre.

Consequently, we have been able to develop and nurture strong links with many community groups in the area such as the Men's Shed, Active Retirement Groups, Women's Ukulele Group, Transition Year Students, Heritage Group and Moycullen Community Centre. Furthermore, groups such as the Irish Countrywomen's Association and Moycullen Yoga have availed of the rooms in the Meitheal Centre as part of our strategy to raise awareness of Ability West

and the Meitheal Centre amongst the general public and it has become a real focal point in the village as a result.

The visit of 'Pretty Fingers' from Snipe Resource Centre in Galway City and Moycullen Ukulele Group to Meitheal during Social Inclusion Week in October proved to be a great success, with over 100 people visiting on the day. Incidentally, although not intended as a fundraising event, almost €500 was donated on the day. Many thanks to all who attended and gave so generously. We very much enjoyed meeting you and showcasing our service.

The continuing fundraising efforts of the Moycullen Branch and Moycullen community, along with a grant from the Galway Wind Farm Project and capital funds from Ability West, resulted in the development of a new washroom/shower area in our centre. We also received a wonderful picnic table from the Moycullen Men's Shed, which looks great in our recreational area. Many thanks to all involved.

In 2019 we look forward to working in partnership with all stakeholders to ensure that the young people attending the Meitheal Centre are supported in taking their rightful place, as equal and valued citizens, in their community.

A TRIBUTE TO PATRICK MCGRATH (1944 - 2018)

BY STAFF AT MACOTAR
LODGE



*Patrick (Paddy)
McGrath RIP (1944 - 2018)*

Patrick McGrath or Paddy, as he liked to be called, began availing of services with the former Galway Association. Paddy initially spent some time in Blackrock House, Galway City. However, when a bungalow became available in Kilkerrin, some of the residents of Blackrock House, including Paddy, moved to the countryside.

Macotar Lodge was built by the organisation in 1984, Paddy relocated there and quickly made himself at home. He made his opinions known on any topic and at every opportunity. His recall was second-to-none, right up to the end of his life and he would regularly reminisce about the days of his youth and going to fairs in Dunmore. Paddy could name all the characters he encountered along the way.

Paddy had great affection for his neighbours and friends at home in

Boyouagh, especially the Brennon Family who he mentioned by name almost every day with great warmth. Indeed, the Brennon family visited Paddy regularly in Macotar Lodge. Paddy always showed concern for his peers, especially if anyone was unwell. This could also be said for staff and their families and he would always remember people's names.

Paddy loved to see visitors and he would hold court as he asked questions about their family and he always asked if they were farming. He asked visitors or anyone he met after mass or on the street if they were from Boyounagh. If people were from a neighbouring parish, Paddy would name someone he knew from that parish many decades previously. He certainly loved to meet people and have a chat.

Paddy was a kind and friendly man and he is missed by all in Macotar Lodge. May he rest in peace.



*John Walshe
RIP (1944 – 2018)*

A TRIBUTE TO JOHN WALSH (1944 - 2018)

BY STAFF AT ST. FRANCIS
ADULT DAY SERVICE

John began attending St. Francis Adult Day Service (ADS) in 1982. He had initially attended his local national school and afterwards remained at home helping out on the family farm.

John loved people and was interested in every little detail about the staff from where we came from, our relations, our partners, our children and our neighbours. He followed our lives throughout the years and always knew what our children were doing in school, college or work, their partners and more recently, their children. In addition, he kept us up-to-date about his own family, his much loved sisters, his in-laws, nieces, nephews and he loved to share news of graduations, engagements, weddings, births and baptisms.

John surprised us with his general knowledge down through the years. He enjoyed listening to the radio, watching television and scanning the newspapers to find out what was happening in the world. John was very interested in politics and world affairs. He figured out very quickly what political leanings the staff had and we suffered a lot of ribbing from him, especially at election time.

John loved all sport but particularly football and hurling. Staff were assured of great debates and discussions each Monday following the weekend matches and he was always in a hurry to check out the newspaper that day. John had great relationships with his fellow service users and their families. He was first on the bus each morning so he knew where everyone's house was, what car they drove and he was not beyond some teasing about what stage their farm work was at or who did not have their turf home.

John had a tremendous work ethic and could not understand the need for breaks. We often had to remind John, or sometimes insist, that he take a break. He would have a quick lunch, a mug of tea, a short nap and then back to work. He worked quietly and diligently at the many projects in which he was involved throughout the years. He loved gardening and photos of our vegetable garden would make any professional gardener envious. John took sole charge of keeping the boundary hedge and 'woe betide' anyone who touched his hedge clippers.

Sadly, John's health began to fail in 2017 and he moved to a nursing home nearby to Macotar Lodge. He was very happy there and continued to join St. Francis for activities until April 2018. John spent some time in hospital and passed away peacefully in June 2018 surrounded by his loving family.

John is greatly missed by all of us who knew and loved him. May his gentle soul rest in peace.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS 2018

BY MARY LATCHFORD, GENERAL ASSISTANT,
DOCHAS ADULT DAY SERVICE



*l-r:- Alan Murphy,
Noel Collins, Kieran Hett
and Kevin Keaveney*

Dochas Adult Day Service (ADS) became involved in the selection process for the Motor Activities Programme for the Special Olympics in 2018. The team enjoyed travelling to different centres in Connaught to practice and prepare for the competition. We were very excited when Noel Collins, Kevin Keaveney, Kieran Hett and Alan Murphy were selected for the big event.

Once all the necessary paperwork was completed, the athletes, staff and volunteers were fitted for the Team Connaught gear. The athletes trained for four days and had wonderful support from their coach, Ann McElhone. A fundraising quiz was held in Conneely's pub in Kilkerrin to cover the costs of attending the programme in June.

We all met in Kilkerrin on a bright, clear day and our bus driver, Dermot Connelly, brought the athletes, staff, volunteers and family members to the National Sports Arena in Abbotstown, Co. Dublin. Ann McElhone met us with a hearty welcome and we were given our I.D. badges and

before we knew it, we were in the opening parade of the Special Olympics Motor Activities Programme 2018.

Each contestant lined up for their event and they received wonderful encouragement from family, friends and supporters. The presentation of medals was acknowledged by thunderous applause as all present recognised the hard work and effort put in by each participant.

After lunch we attended the second part of the programme and then headed home, stopping for a meal on the way. We arrived home exhausted but very happy after a wonderful day.

Our achievements were spoken about by the Parish Priest at mass in Kilkerrin and many people in the community congratulated the Olympians while out and about for the weeks that followed. The celebrations continued throughout the year. A special tribute was paid to the Olympians by Jackie Kelly, Manager, Dochas ADS, at our drama show in October.



Congratulations to Eanna Connelly, Matthew Brennan and Joseph Lynch on their participation in the Special Olympics in June 2018. Well done on bringing home the medals!!

The four Olympians got another opportunity to show off their medals at our Christmas mass when the gold medals were presented in the offertory procession as a symbol of their abilities and achievements. Fr. Louis Lohan then presented the four Olympians with certificates from the Mayor of Galway.

Many thanks to Jackie Kelly who organised our participation in Team Connaught and also our volunteers, without whom we would not have been able to attend. Thanks to these four wonderful Olympians who have given us a wealth of fond memories.

LORRAINE HESSION EUCCHARISTIC MINISTER

BY LINDA KEANE, VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME MANAGER



Fr. John O'Gorman, Parish Priest, Lackagh Parish and Lorraine Hession, Eucharistic Minister

Lorraine Hession was bestowed with the role of Eucharistic Minister in Lackagh Parish in July 2018. When Fr. John O'Gorman, Parish Priest, asked Lorraine to undertake this important role, many of us felt a very special pride that there was equal opportunity for all parishioners to be involved in church duties.

We are very grateful to Fr. Bernard Shaughnessy and Fr. O'Gorman for their ongoing support of the Cáirdeas Disco which takes place each month in the Turloughmore GAA Centre.

NEW EASY RIDER BIKE MOUNTBELLEW RESOURCE CENTRE

Following a fundraising campaign by staff, service users and volunteers in our **Mountbellew Resource Centre**, an easy rider bike was purchased. This is a semi-recumbent tricycle, designed for people with low muscle tone in the lower limbs. The lower centre of gravity and slanted wheels improves rider safety and stability, thus avoiding toppling over, as is common with other tricycles. The easy rider is also hoist accessible. It is a great way to promote exercise and introduce community integration. Cycling is a fun aerobic activity which improves heart health, builds muscle and increases overall fitness.



Christopher Reilly on the Easy Rider Bike at Mountbellew Resource Centre

SERVICE USER COUNCIL UPDATE

BY JOHN FARRAGHER, CHAIRPERSON, AND ALAN O'CONNOR, FACILITATOR, SERVICE USER COUNCIL



Ability West's Service User Council, following a successful consultation day in November which involved a thought provoking workshop on Assisted Decision Making. Well done to all involved in organising and participating in this event.

Back row l-r: Audrey Pidgeon, Director of Client Services, Matthew Brennan, Member, John Farragher, Chairperson, Paul Cannon, Member, Chloe Conneely, Member, Breda Crehan-Roche, Chief Executive, Front row l-r: Jimmy Sweeney, Member and Mary Joyce, Member

In 2018 the **Service User Council** set up an Advocacy Champion Programme which involves one service user from each residential and day service acting as a liaison person to the Service User Council. The chosen champion is responsible for maintaining contact with the Service User Council through the Service User Forum, to speak on behalf of service users on issues that affect their daily lives, such as the services they receive from the organisation or indeed any service they receive. Ideas or suggestions are then brought to the attention of the Chief Executive, Senior Management Team or relevant others.

The council had a very successful Consultation Day in November with 138

service users in attendance. They also participated in a research project entitled 'Doctors and Us'. This research focused on what doctor visits are like for people with intellectual disability. The council also maintained close links with the National Platform of Self-Advocates, which forms part of Minister Finian McGrath's consultation team.

This year, the council was consulted on the Strategic Plan 2019 - 2023 and in particular contributed to changes to the Vision and Mission statements.

If you would like any further information on the Service User Council, you can contact John.Farragher@abilitywest.ie.

QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE UPDATE 2018

BY EILEEN COSTELLO-CONNELY,
QUALITY AND COMPLIANCE MANAGER



Mayor McNelis visits the Tuam Road Hub on 20th September 2018 to discuss pedestrian accessibility. I-r: John McHugo, Director of Finance, Ray Kelly, Chairman, Niall McNelis, Mayor of Galway, John Howard, Instructor Tuam Road Hub, Bridget Donnellan, Manager Tuam Road Hub, Daniel Conneely, Service User, Tuam Road Hub.

The quality of services and supports in **Ability West** is monitored and reviewed on a continual basis to ensure we have oversight in terms of trends and areas for improvement. The organisation complies with a wide range of legislation, regulations and standards in areas of corporate governance, management, services and supports. Some of these areas include company, charities, employment and health and safety legislation; codes of practice; compliance with Statutory Instruments 366 and 367; National Standards for Residential and Respite Services; HSE Interim Standards for Day Services, and national policies and procedures such as Children First and Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse.

Ability West has a Quality Management System in place which encompasses all services and supports, providing a framework for overall integrated quality management. This is externally accredited by the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) to the international standard ISO 9001:2015. Ability West was successful in maintaining certification to this standard in 2018.

We have also been successful in maintaining certification to the standard 'Excellence Through People 1000:2012', which is externally accredited by the NSAI. This accreditation is based on human resources processes, continuous improvement and communication.

Ability West reviewed its processes on risk management during 2018 and these are now aligned to the standard ISO 31000:2018, which is a framework for integrated risk management, providing a structure in relation to how the organisation manages risk and its commitment in this regard.

The Quality Management System is very beneficial, particularly for identifying areas of good practice, areas that need improvement and progress on these, taking an overall integrated risk management and continual improvement approach. This is undertaken in many ways, including carrying out and analysing results of internal audits, external inspections, feedback, complaints, accident/incident records and statutory notification records.

HIQA

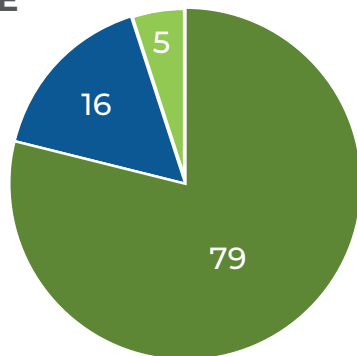
Ability West complies with the National Standards for Residential Services for Children and Adults with Disabilities, along with the applicable legislation, i.e. Statutory Instrument 367. All of our residential and residential respite services (designated centres) have successfully been registered and registration certificates have been received. All services were successfully re-registered during 2018 with the exception of one which was re-registered in April 2019. Ability West also successfully registered two new designated centres; Teach Michel Apartments, Galway City, in February 2018 and Riverside Apartments, Tuam, in August 2019.

During 2018, HIQA carried out 25 inspections of our designated centres. We increased our compliance levels (fully compliant and substantially compliant) from 59% in 2016 to 95% in 2018.

We did not receive any actions in the category of non-compliance – major in 2018.

% COMPLIANCE LEVEL - HIQA INSPECTIONS 2018

- Compliant
- Substantially Compliant
- Non Compliant - Moderate



There was a significant increase in compliance levels for 'Health, Safety and Risk Management'. We achieved 95% compliance level in fire safety and 85% in risk management areas. This was a substantial increase on 2017:

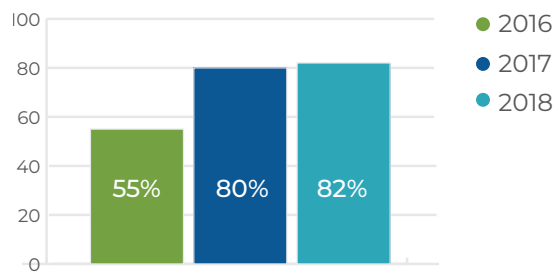


The improved results in 2018 reflect the investment into areas such as facilities upgrades, and the approval and publishing of an updated integrated risk management policy and procedure using the ISO standard framework of ISO31000:2018.

Results in relation to social care needs, which relates to crucial areas such as person centred planning, goal setting, assessment of needs, annual reviews, and transition planning, is consistently maintained at 82% for 2018, this was 80% in 2017.

COMPLIANCE SOCIAL CARE NEEDS

COMPLIANT AND SUBSTANTIALLY COMPLIANT RESULTS



In relation to workforce, we achieved very high standards in 2018, with 100% compliance levels in Persons in Charge and staffing regulation; and 95% in staff training and development. We increased our compliance level in the Governance and Management areas from 68% in 2017 to 96% in 2018.

Overall results in terms of strengths and areas for improvement are compiled and compared with our Provider Led Audits results, and other analysis, such as, accidents/incidents and complaints. The results are shared through the line management structure in terms of overall learning and the identification and management of risk.

HSE INTERIM STANDARDS FOR DAY SERVICES

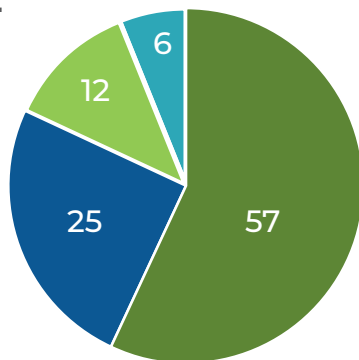
Ability West continues to implement the HSE Interim Standards for New Directions, Services and Supports for Adults with Disabilities in our day services. Ability West takes account of these standards and our own policies and procedures when undertaking audits in day services. During 2018 day services commenced completing the self-assessment tool, called Evaluation, Action and Self Improvement (EASI) Tool. This is a process of reviewing services and supports against the HSE Interim Standards and working on any resulting actions. Work on this self-assessment continues in 2019.

ABILITY WEST PROVIDER LED AUDIT PROGRAMME

A key process for monitoring services is the organisation's Provider Led Audit (PLA) Programme. In 2018, a minimum of two audits were undertaken in all residential and respite services in compliance with HIQA Standards and Regulations. A number of audits took place in day services, particularly to sample the processes and compliance levels with our policies and procedures and the HSE Interim Standards. The results of the PLAs have been reviewed with strengths and areas for improvement identified and these are shared through the line management structure in the organisation. Overall compliance from PLAs are as follows:

PLAs OVERALL COMPLIANCE LEVELS

- Compliant
- Substantially Compliant
- Non Compliant - Moderate
- Non Compliant - Major



QUALITY AND SAFETY COMMITTEES

Ability West has a Quality and Safety Board Committee which drives quality improvement and provides assurance that there are appropriate and effective governance structures, processes, standards and oversight in place with regard to quality and safety. The organisation also has a Quality and Safety Executive Committee in place which oversees and evaluates the comprehensive quality and safety programme with associated structures, policies and processes which are the vehicle for improving quality and safety, and underpinned by an integrated risk management approach.

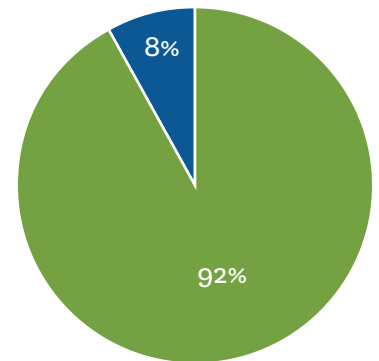
FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS

Ability West welcomes feedback and complaints and utilises a computerised system for recording feedback, managing complaints and analysing same. This feeds into our overall processes for review and improvements. Feedback during 2018 ranged from compliments on overall quality of services and supports provided to family members, to satisfaction with facilities overall.

A total of 130 complaints were logged in 2018, with a total of 92% resolved at the end of January 2019. The majority of complaints were in relation to accessing services and transport for school leavers and some complaints were in relation to communication, information provision and overall accountability.

RESOLVED/ UNRESOLVED COMPLAINTS 2018

- Resolved
- Unresolved

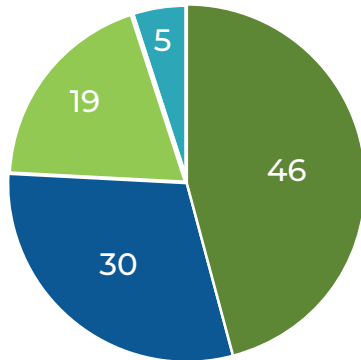


HEALTH AND SAFETY

In 2018 the number of health and safety incidents recorded was 3,462, showing a slight decrease from the previous year. The top four categories were: 'Behaviours that Challenge', 'Other', 'Medication' and 'Slips/Trips/Falls'. There were 150 incidents logged under Client Protection/Safeguarding for 2018, representing a decrease from 191 incidents in 2017.

CATEGORY OF SEVERITY OF ACCIDENTS/ INCIDENTS 2018

- Negligible
- Minor
- Moderate
- Major



Overall results in terms of learning, areas for improvement and management of risk are shared through the line management structure.

The Clinical Indemnity Scheme (CIS) is managed by the State Claims Agency (SCA) on behalf of the State. Currently, Ability West reports incidents to the National Incident Management System (NIMS). Ability West is not currently delegated to the General Indemnity Scheme and as such, is only required at the present time to report service user related incidents.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND DATA PROTECTION

Statistics in relation to Freedom of Information and Data Protection for 2018 are detailed hereunder:

FOI AND DATA PROTECTION STATS (JAN- DEC 2018)

	Number
FOI Requests	5
Internal Reviews	0
Subject Access Requests	2
Subject Access Requests - Under Administration Access by HR	1
Data Breaches	12

Ability West complies with Freedom of Information legislation and has processes in place in this regard. The organisation has a Freedom of Information Publication Scheme which is available on our website.

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into force in May 2018. Ability West complies with regulation and Data Protection legislation. The organisation has policies and procedures in place in this regard, and liaises with the Data Commissioner's Office in relation to queries and the notification of data breaches.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk management is an integral part of overall services and supports, supported by a comprehensive policy and associated procedures, using the standard ISO 31000:2018 as a framework for integrated risk management.

A key part of this is the identification and escalation of risk where it cannot be managed at service level. This is done in line with our integrated Risk Management Pathway. Each service has a centre risk register and risk assessments, detailing risk treatment, along with individual risk assessments for service users. If it becomes apparent that a particular situation poses a risk that may not be able to be carried in the service, for example, inability of service to provide for the changing support needs of a service user under current resources, then this is escalated through the line management structure. Specific risks are then entered as relevant on the Corporate Risk Register. Risks are also identified in other ways, for example, through complaints, inspections, audits, review of services and supports. This is overseen by the Quality and Safety Committees, the Senior Management Team and Chief Executive.

VOLUNTEER UPDATE

BY LINDA KEANE, VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME MANAGER



Best Buddies Conán O'Donnell and Paul Cannon

Ability West's **Volunteer Programme** aims to enhance the lives of people with an intellectual disability and augment programmes delivered in our services. We have been very fortunate that the very best people in our society have chosen to volunteer their time and make a difference. The ethos of equal rights is furthered by volunteers who create equal opportunities for people attending our services to learn new skills, engage in activities in the community and make new friends.

The volunteer role varies according to the wishes of the volunteer. Some choose to be an extra pair of hands or to share a talent/skill in a centre, thereby enhancing our services, others take on an equally rewarding role of befriending. Volunteers are encouraged to share what they enjoy doing with others so the volunteer role is very diverse and flexible.

There are also group activities including A Touch of Ability Craft & Social Evening Group in Tuam, Cárdeas Disco in Turloughmore Community Centre, an art group in Loughrea and tag rugby in Monivea.

As volunteers are working with vulnerable children and adults, a person wishing to volunteer must undergo a screening process, i.e. complete a volunteer application and undergo Garda vetting. Comprehensive training is provided to volunteers and we seek a commitment of six months.



*Director of Best Buddies International Programmes visits Ability West in November 2018
l-r: Linda Keane, Volunteer Programme Manager, Jennifer Allen, Director of Best Buddies International, Breda Crehan-Roche, Chief Executive*



Sean Coyne, St. Joseph's Training Centre and Barry Foley, Occupational Therapist.

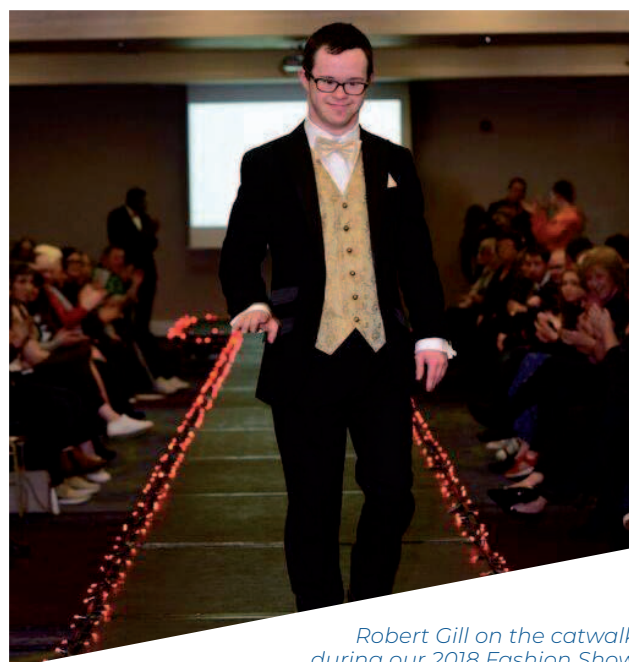
MAKING A FRIEND

Everyone needs a friend and people with intellectual disability are no different. We all need a little fun in our lives and volunteers who engage in the Befriending Programme will tell you that meeting and socialising with people in Ability West is very rewarding. Volunteers are matched with a peer who has similar interests.

The Best Buddies College Programme continues to be a popular society to join at NUIG and GMIT. Through this programme, young people learn more about themselves, develop an understanding of intellectual disability and have an opportunity to truly embrace diversity and equality. The Best Buddies Ball is one of the social highlights of the year, when we celebrate the many friendships that have been forged. We were particularly pleased when Best Buddies won the Phoenix Society Award and Best Society Photograph Award at the NUIG Societies Awards 2018.

FITNESS CAMPS

During the summer months, Barry Foley, Occupational Therapist, and a team of wonderful volunteers run a fitness camp for those interested in working out over the holidays. This camp has been running for the past five years, most recently taking place in the Kingfisher Club in NUIG. Thank you to Barry and all the volunteers who have supported this initiative.



Robert Gill on the catwalk during our 2018 Fashion Show

FUNDRAISING UPDATE 2018

BY MICHAEL DUKE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER



Presentation of Funds

Raised at the Harvest Festival Walk

Back row l-r: Clare Loughnane, David Hodgins, Pakie Carvey, Jamie Donoghue, Gerry Blake, Aishling Sheehy, Shannon Tuplin

Front row l-r: Joseph Brien, Saoirse Lyons, Anne-Marie Dolan, Lorraine Garvey, Ruth Davis, John Quinn

This was another action-packed year for **community development and fundraising** in Ability West. To all the many kind people who gave their valuable time to organise a fundraiser or shook a bucket in all weather conditions, we would like to say a heartfelt thank you, we really appreciate your dedication and support of Ability West and the work that we do.

FUNDRAISING

Some of the fundraising efforts that took place during the year included door to door collections, church gate collections, sponsored walks, bag packing, coffee mornings, bingo nights, drama evenings and much more.

The people who avail of our services benefited greatly from the commitment and hard work of the amazing individuals, groups and teams who volunteer with us. Many thanks to the people from all walks of life, with a common desire to make a difference in their community and in their own life, and who so generously gave their time.

NEW SPONSORSHIP PROGRAMME

In 2018 we launched a new sponsorship programme with platinum, gold, silver and bronze partnerships available. This programme was created to support a new day centre/hub in Headford. A special thanks to our first sponsors to come on board; Platinum Partner, O'Leary Insurance Group, Silver Partner, FCC Chartered Accountants and Bronze Partner, Galway Taxis.

FASHION AND ENTERTAINMENT SHOW

Ability West held its sixth fashion and entertainment show in November 2018 in the Clayton Hotel. It is safe to say that with an audience of nearly 600, over 70 models, 26 performers and over €11,000 raised, the catwalk was practically blown away by the glitz, glamour and all-round entertainment. Solo and group performances on the night ranged from martial arts to singing, and from stand-up comedy to dancing.



Galway Golf Club Members present a cheque for €15,000 to Ability West's Chief Executive and Chairman following a hugely successful Golf Fundraiser on 25th August 2018. Indeed, additional funds were received since that presentation in September 2018. Sincere thanks to all involved; sponsors, participants, golf club committee members and Galway Golf Club.

Front l-r: Laura Kelly, Sheila O'Loughlin, Breda Crehan-Roche, CEO, Ability West, Pat Canney, Galway Golf Club, Ray Kelly, Chairman, Michelle Concannon, Padraig Kelly, Ability West. Back l-r: Bosco McDermott, Galway Golf Club, John McHugo, Director of Finance, Ability West, David Kelly, Galway Golf Club Manager

We would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to all of the models and performers who made everyone so proud on the night. Our sincere thanks to the businesses that supported the event and so generously provided spot prizes for the raffle, the venue, outfits for our models, slide sponsorship, staging and donations. Events such as this one would not be possible without your ongoing support. Proceeds from this event were utilised to purchase a new Citroen Picasso for service users in Tuam, the purchase of which was supplemented by funds from other Ability West fundraising events.

MENLO WALK

The 11th Annual Menlo Walk took place on 11th February 2018. This 5 mile walk is held annually on the Sunday prior to St. Valentine's Day and was a fantastic success. Almost €5,000 was raised and we would like to thank the Kelly family and the Galway City Branch who organised this event and also the many people who participated and supported the walk.

GOLF FUNDRAISER AND RAFFLE 2018

The 12th Annual Ability West Golf Fundraiser and Raffle took place in August in Galway Golf Club. It was the most successful year yet with over €17,500 raised. With Galway being a contender for both the All-Ireland Hurling and Football Finals it helped drum up sales of raffle tickets as our top prizes included two tickets for both finals. A very enjoyable day was had by all and special thanks, as always, to the outstanding Galway Golf Club Committee who have shown tremendous commitment to supporting our organisation and individuals with intellectual disability year after year. Special thanks in particular to Bosco McDermott, Committee Member in Galway Golf Club who was instrumental in arranging this event. Sincere thanks to the main sponsors O'Leary Insurance Group and Wings Golf Society.

As you will appreciate, there were so many more events held throughout the year and on behalf of Ability West I would like to sincerely thank everyone who organised, participated in and supported any of the events held in aid of Ability West.

SUMMARY OF FUNDRAISING AND DONATIONS 2018



Presentation of a cheque for €4,070 for Milaoise ADS. Noreen Goode held a fundraiser in the Ard Ri Hotel in July 2018, in conjunction with Della Dolan and a benefit tea dance in aid of Milaoise.

l-r: Noreen Goode, Parent, Anthony Goode, Service User, Milaoise ADS, David Basquill, Manager, Milaoise ADS

	2018 €	2017 €
Branch Fundraising		
Ballinasloe	2,167	2,414
Galway City	7,487	11,690
Glenamaddy	995	9,400
Headford/Caherlistrane	2,782	1,618
Killascobe	2,500	2,380
Killimor	4,000	4,510
Loughrea	1,961	1,011
Tuam	133	1,476
Total Branch Fundraising	22,025	34,499
Other Fundraising and Donations	148,161	61,560
Total Fundraising and Donations	170,186	96,059

AUDITED ACCOUNTS



Presentation of a cheque for €1,500 fundraised for Milaoise ADS by Ireland's Pit Bull Terrier Association and Bullbreed Registry.

Front: Hank, IPBTA&BBR, Back l-r: Madeline Collins, Annette Howard, representing IPBTA&BBR, John Melia, Elaine Hession, Cathy Delaney, Julie Delaney (Cathy's mother) representing IPBTA&BBR

The Company's Auditors, **FCC Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors**, reported, without qualification, that the 2018 financial statements gave a true and fair view of the company's affairs and of its results for the year and were properly prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice and the Companies Act 2014.

The audited accounts were approved at a meeting of the Board of Directors held on 15th April 2019 and were signed on behalf of the Board of Directors by Mr. Mick Finnerty and Mr. Michael A. O'Connor

A full copy of the audited accounts 2018 is available on www.abilitywest.ie.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



*Christmas Draw 2018
l-r: Breda Crehan-Roche, CEO, Michael Duke,
Community Development Officer, Deputy Mayor of Galway City,
Cllr. Donal Lyons*

Ability West would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the various individuals and organisations whose co-operation and support have been invaluable to the organisation. In particular, we would like to thank parents, carers, family members and service users for their ongoing assistance.

Thanks to:

- The Health Service Executive, HSE Staff and the Health Service Executive Corporate Employee Relations Services; Department of Education and Skills, Department of Social Protection, and Galway and Roscommon Education and Training Board.

- Staff Members in all our services
- Board Members, Branch Members and Volunteers
- Statutory, Non-Statutory and Voluntary Service Providers
- In addition, we are deeply grateful to local community groups, businesses and individuals from across Galway City and County for their ongoing assistance and support in 2018; there are too many to name individually but we know who you are.



*Papal Visit to Knock Shrine
 Front l-r: Madeline Collins, Palace Fields Group Home,
 Gabriel Burke, Palace Fields Group Home, Pat McDonagh,
 The Birches Group Home.
 Back l-r: Bernie O'Brien, Staff Member, Anne Canney,
 Staff Member, Breda Nicholson, Palace Fields Group Home.*



*Ability West at the Science and
 Technology Festival in NUIG, November 2018
 l-r: Aoife Kerans, NUIG Student Volunteer, Brendan Hehir,
 Elizabeth Horgan, NUIG Student Volunteer, Cathy Burke,
 Marguerite Fahy Joe Starr*



*Ray Kelly, Chairman
presenting Service User's artwork
to retiring Board Member, Bridie Newell,
May 2018.*



*Ray Kelly, Chairman
presenting Service User's artwork
to retiring Board Member, Jack King,
May 2018.*



*Ray Kelly, Chairman
presenting Service User's artwork
to retiring Board Member, Marie O'Dowd,
May 2018.*



*Ray Kelly, Chairman
presenting Service User's artwork
to retiring Board Member, Mary O'Mahony,
May 2018.*



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